

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

The "Other Faces" of Wasatch

Any area that reaches the century mark in its growth stands as another witness to the most common phenomenon of life—change. Wasatch County is no exception. Prosperous Provo Valley has flourished as men have changed the landscape and introduced improved, new ways of living.

Some areas of Wasatch County have changed more than others. The "boom and bust" area of Soldiers Summit was once a flourishing community and now is a ghost town. Hailstone or Elkhorn was the scene of a prosperous lumbering operation and now is little more than a widened highway. Developments were begun in both Provo Canyon and Daniels Canyon, and these, too, have given way to new highway projects. Still another changing area in the extreme north east part of the county is Strawberry Reservoir, a delightful resort and fishing spot, now undergoing a transition through conservation and wildlife practices.

SOLDIERS SUMMIT

Tragedy, a railroad boom and now near oblivion are the brief steps of history in Soldiers Summit, one of the few communities in Wasatch County that lies outside Provo Valley.

The ghost town of today had its beginning about 1862 in the midst of tragedy. Soldiers from Johnston's Army that had been stationed at Camp Floyd were recalled to aid in the Civil War. Desiring to return to the East as quickly as possible many of the soldiers started up Spanish Fork Canyon along the pass between the Colorado Basin and the Great Basin. Caught in a blizzard common to the high mountain country, they died from exposure. The bodies were buried near the pass at a spot which became known as "Soldiers Summit" in their honor.

Years later as railroads began operating in the state the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad found it advantageous to establish a traffic control point at the summit. Extra locomotives were needed to pull the trains over the pass, and the crews that operated these engines were based at Soldiers Summit. A round-house was built there to be used in turning the locomotives around, and the area began to flourish.

In 1919 a real estate firm headed by H. C. Means began to promote the area in a development program. The government, which at that time was operating the railroads, threw its support behind the development and the boom was on.

Soldiers Summit was incorporated as a city in 1921 by H. O. Means,



Students in the schoolroom at Soldiers Summit, with Charles Bronson, teacher, standing in the rear of the room.

W. L. Dean and Fred C. Ferron. The first mayor was Jerry R. Springer who was deputy sheriff and operator of a coal yard. At the time of incorporation, the city had a population of more than 1,000.

One of the first major projects after incorporation was a "cinder project." The active chamber of commerce, railroad employees and school officials hauled cinders on all the main walks and streets to make it possible to travel in stormy, muddy weather.

Businesses grew up quickly in the new town, and were mainly based around railroad activity. There were general merchandise stores, restaurants, movie and entertainment houses, eating, rooming and boarding houses and other miscellaneous establishments.

School were also built to accommodate the more than 200 students who lived in the community at the time of incorporation. Five teachers were hired, a new school building of modern design was erected. Charles E. Bronson was named principal of the school.

Churches likewise were established, with the LDS ward located in the Nebo Stake of Utah County. Bishop Bills was the first bishop of the ward. The Baptists also established a church with a resident clergyman.

During the boom years, a wax mine of high purity was discovered just east of the town. The wax was dug out in large lumps, melted, refined and shipped east for industrial use. As many as a dozen men were hired at the time.

In later years, changes in railroad policy and the development of powerful engines that would negotiate the mountain passes without help

119
as well as diversion of traffic to other routes, brought the downfall of Soldiers Summit. Many of the railroad facilities were removed, and with them went the people.

Today the ghost town has only a school with 12 pupils and one teacher. The businesses are few, and depend entirely on highway traffic for their support.

HAILSTONE

Hailstone, or Elkhorn as it has been known at times, was homesteaded in 1864 and 1865 in an area about nine miles north of Heber. The original settlers were William Paret Hailstone, Ann Davis Hailstone, William Davis and William Denton Moulton. During the time of homesteading William Davis married Mary Goddard Collins and William Moulton married Mary Lee and then later Mary Ann Davis.

Each of the original settlers homesteaded large acreages. They built small, log homes until larger dwellings could be constructed. One of the most elegant homes was built in 1877 by William Moulton, who prospered in many business ventures.

The house was constructed from sandstone brought from the Lake Cree area. Two front bedrooms were for his wives Mary and Mary Ann. Between the bedrooms was a large, beautiful parlor. There were two staircases leading to the upper story which included several more bedrooms. The house had two bathrooms, a luxury for its day, a huge, almost



The first log house in Hailstone. Owned by William Davis. Shown here on the horse is Rex Blackley.



The William Denton Moulton home built in 1877 in Hailstone. This home was a well known spot on the stage coach line. It was one of the showplaces in the valley in the early days.

"refrigerator like" pantry, three full rooms and a vegetable cellar in the basement. The floors were cedar, an inch and a half thick.

Mr. Moulton prospered in selling supplies to mining camps at Park City. He set up a complete spread on his ranch to handle his business, including a two-story milk shed with a pipeline leading to the dairy room in the house and another pipe line leading back to the calf shed for skim milk. There was a large slaughter house, an ice house and a well inside the barn. For its day it was very complete.

The house became so well known that the stage coach line from Heber City to Salt Lake built a side road so that passengers could view both back and front of the home and its surroundings.

When Mr. Moulton died his brother-in-law Orson H. Lee became foreman and owner of the property and for 30 years carried on the same work, selling supplies to mining camps as Mr. Moulton did. His three sons helped in the operation, and one son, Fay Lee, owned the property until it was torn down in 1959 to make way for new highway developments.

Others who came to the Hailstone area to homestead included Henry Cluff, Henry H. Walker, Benjamin Norris, John Buttery, Edward Dillon, John Swift and a Mr. Walkey. A daughter of the Hailstones, Emily, and her husband, Joseph Morris, operated the original Hailstone property, and their sons Harry, Moroni and Rodney and then the sons of Harry Morris took over the operation.

When William Davis died in 1891 his property was taken over by his sons William H. and Robert Davis. In 1939 some of the land was sold to the New Park Mining Company and the remaining part was sold to the LDS Church for a welfare farm.

The Henry Cluff property was sold to James and Sarah McDonald who later sold it to George A. Fisher, the founder of Keetley and Gail

Fisher—they built a number of small homes on the property which he rented to men working at the Park Utah Mine.

The Benjamin Norris property was known for an American Flag that he painted on a cliff near his home. The flag can be seen from the highway, and was repainted yearly under the direction of Isabelle Baum who maintained the tradition until her death since then it has been painted by Veterans of Foreign Wars of Heber.

Hailstone's greatest industrial development, apart from its support to the mining industry, came in 1929 when the Great Lakes Timber Company was established by Elmer Peterson, a Denver lumberman, and Michael J. Sweeney, a veteran western timberman. The lumbering operation prospered and in 1933 Mr. Sweeney became general manager and then sole owner in 1946. The company continued with its headquarters at Hailstone until 1960 when it moved to LaPoint in Uintah County. Before it moved from Hailstone the company was one of the largest industrial lumber and timber companies in the country. Recreational developments in forest land had reduced the available cutting timber in the Hailstone area of the Wasatch National Forest, which necessitated the move away from the area.

Schools and a branch of the Church existed for a time in Hailstone. The first school and a small cabin across the road from the William D. Moulton home. George Wootton was the first teacher and taught just one year. The next school was held in a little log cabin near the Cluff home and continued there several years until a larger building was constructed near Keetley to handle all the school children in the area. The Elkhorn Branch of the Church also held its meetings here.

A new, red brick school house was finally built in Keetley and was used by all the families in the area until the Wasatch School Board consolidated schooling in the Heber schools.

Some farming and dairy operations still continue at Hailstone, but motorists driving through the area on a new, widened highway hardly slow down now as they pass through what used to be homes, farms and buildings of a very happy people.

PROVO CANYON

Settlers first coming to Provo Valley traveled through Provo Canyon, and some were intrigued enough by its beauty and potential that they began to settle at spots through the canyon. Several resorts and fun spots some of which were in the Wasatch County area were established.

One of the most colorful canyon characters was a Scotsman, William "Billy" Ferguson. He settled in the canyon about 1863 as operator of toll gates at Spring Dell and Vivian Park. Midway between Provo City and Heber he built a famous roadhouse with surrounding camping spots and fishing areas. He especially enjoyed flowers, pets and fruit trees. His friends called him a "born optimist" for he found happiness in every-

thing, especially his mountain home. Visitors enjoyed looking through his scrapbooks, and the many paintings and pictures he displayed.

Being a true Scotsman, he always celebrated the birthday anniversary of Robert Burns on January 25th of each year. He danced the "Highland Fling" like no one else around, to the delight of all the Scots who came to join with him in these entertainments.

His life had an unfortunate ending as he was buried one wintery night in a huge snowslide that covered completely his home, his pets and all his possessions.

DANIELS CANYON

One of the highest and most scenic spots in Wasatch County is Daniels Canyon, which rises to a height of some 8,000 feet. It was first developed by settlers in the valley who sought summer range lands for their livestock. It was also a popular spot from which settlers took timber to build their homes and other buildings.

Through the canyon, which has very narrow, high, rugged sides, runs a stream of crystal clear water. The canyon sides are covered with grass, shrubs, mahogany, scrub oak and maple trees, quaken aspens and many varieties of pine and fir trees along with service berries, elder berries and choke cherries.

Hyrum Oaks was one of the first settlers of Provo Valley to take up ground at the mouth of Daniels Canyon. Tom Brown, a relative of



The old Hyrum Oaks home built on his homestead farm at the mouth of Daniels Canyon.

Mr. Oaks, also built a home in the creek bottoms. Mr. Oaks went through the canyon into the Strawberry Valley to cut wild hay for his stock, and then in 1879, with the help of William Bethers, surveyed a canal at the north end of Strawberry Valley to bring water over into Daniels Canyon. Mr. Oaks also operated a sawmill in the canyon. Just above the Oaks home lived Joe Jacobs and Jim Ivie. Others who lived in the canyon included Ben Bromley, Eli Gordon, Swen Bjorkman, Ab Shelton, Bob and Liza Winterton, Giles and John Winterton. Some who operated sawmills or had other interests in the canyon included William Bethers, the Cleggs, the Parkers, Cory Hanks, John Turner, Patrick McQuire, the Alexanders and the Noakes, the Formans and Charles E. Thacker.

In 1896 a flurry of railroad development occurred in the canyon. The "Wasatch Wave" of August 14, 1896 reported the following:

"The corps of the Rio Grande Western surveyors who have been running a line through Daniels Canyon for the past month, commencing at the summit this side of Strawberry Valley, are down to the mouth of the canyon and will soon have the works completed to Heber. As has been previously stated in these columns, the main line of the new railroad will run through Daniels Canyon and tap the reservation country and Colorado points, thus making Heber the central point in this valley and from where a branch line will be run over to Park City."

Like so many other plans of the day, this railroad "dream" never materialized. However, a narrow, twisting trail through the canyon became in later years part of a transcontinental highway system. The trail crossed the canyon stream by fording shallow plates. At one time a group of photographers were enroute to Vernal for some work with a ten-foot-wide house on wheels. They hired David Thacker to haul the outfit by team, and in order to make any distance he had to stop every few miles and chop out the willows through the canyon.

With the development of U.S. Highway 40, the Daniels Canyon trail became a vital part of the highway. Cattle and sheep are trucked over the road to their summer ranges and hundreds of thousands of tourists use the highway every year. The view from Daniels Canyon into Provo Valley is an awe inspiring sight and provides a fine introduction to the valley for those coming from the east.

In recent years the U.S. Forest Service has established a recreational spot, the Lodge-Pole Camp in the canyon and has also a park near Whiskey Springs, where travelers can refresh themselves with clear, sparkling spring water.

STRAWBERRY LAKE

Many early settlers in Wasatch County looked to the Strawberry Valley for water needs. The valley seemed a natural reservoir site and many felt a resort trade could also be built around such a reservoir.

One who dreamed about the reservoir and then did something about it was Henry Gardner, state senator from Spanish Fork in Utah County.



This rare picture shows the tedious method of logging employed in the Strawberry Valley during its early development.

He and others convinced the Bureau of Reclamation of the value of the project and aided in the Bureau's purchase of some 56,000 acres of choice range and grazing country from out of the Indian reservation.

The dam and reservoir were completed by the Bureau of Reclamation in 1912. There are some 8,600 acres under water and about 45,500 acres in the area used for range lands. A unique feature of the project is a four-mile-long tunnel that provides the outlet from the bottom of the lake. The tunnel is at the opposite end of the lake from the dam and takes the water from the Colorado Drainage system to the Salt Lake Drainage system. At one point the tunnel is 1,700 feet under the mountains. Water from the reservoir is used for irrigation in the south end of Utah Valley.

From the beginning the reservoir proved to be a popular fishing and resort area. Boating became popular, both for fishing in the deep waters and for sport. Some of the largest native and rainbow trout ever caught in the state have come from Strawberry Lake. Many deer are brought out of the mountains that surround the lake each hunting season.

At its peak there are some 500 private cabins and four commercial fishing camps on the shores of the lake. As many as 1,500 boats have been on the lake at one time.

The first commercial resort and camp was operated by Charles. Jim and George A. Madsen. Later, George A. Madsen and his wife Nettie, established their own camp and made it famous for excellent food.

1125
The camp is now operated by their son, G. Frank Madsen and his wife Chloe, who still have an excellent dining room.

The original Madsen Brothers Camp is now operated by Tony Madsen, a son of Charles. It, along with the Fred Clark Camp and the Howard Carpenter Camp, are popular gathering places for fishermen and sportsmen.